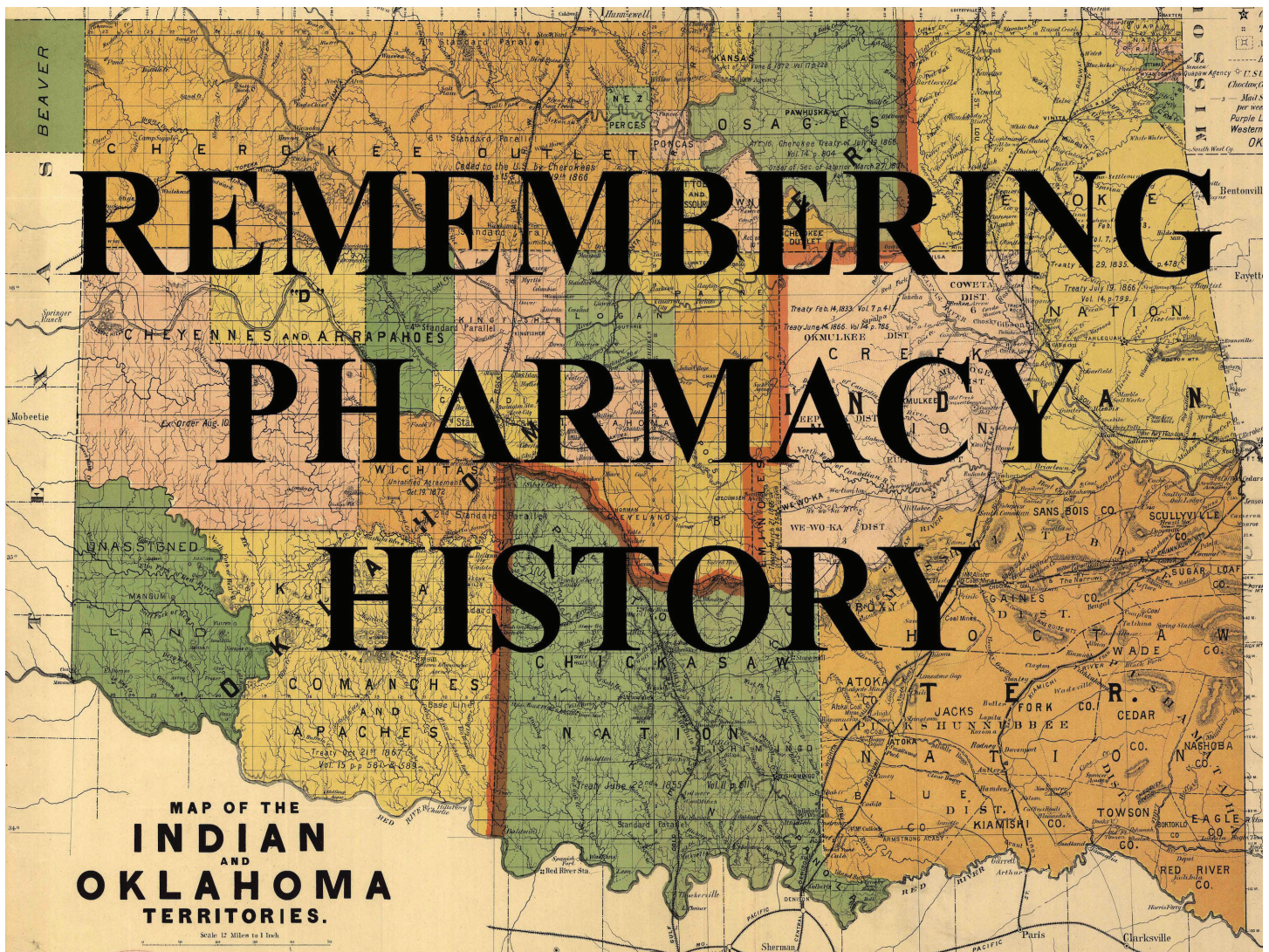


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Sister Mary Teresa Bramsiepe and the Founding of the Oklahoma Society of Hospital Pharmacists



*Cover Logo based on an
1892 map of Indian and
Oklahoma Territories in the
United States Library of
Congress.*

Sister Mary Teresa Bramsiepe and the Founding of the Oklahoma Society of Hospital Pharmacists

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In Oklahoma pharmacy circles, she became known simply as Sister. No other name was needed in the telling of her activities and achievements. Without her desire for the formation of a hospital pharmacy organization in Oklahoma and her diligence in fostering it during the early years, the Oklahoma Society of Hospital Pharmacists (OSHP) may have been delayed in being formed. Such was the forcefulness of Sister Teresa.

Her name at birth on March 27, 1893, was Alwine Wilhelmine Bramsiepe. Her birthplace was Byfang, located in the German state of Nordrhein-Westfalen northeast of the larger city of Kupferdreh on the Ruhr River. She was the sixth born of eleven children of her parents, Henry and Alwine Elizabeth (Kamperhoff) Bramsiepe. Both of her parents and all of her siblings were born in Germany. Her father Henry was born on October 20, 1858, and died on August 2, 1922. Her mother Alwine was born on September 18, 1858 and died on June 12, 1935.¹

After completing the eighth grade, Alwine worked for a few years in a millinery store.² In the early fall of 1913, the bulletin of the Catholic church that Alwine attended carried a notice that Sister Mary Katherine Kurz of the Sisters of St. Francis in Maryville, Missouri, was visiting her sick mother in Baden in southern Germany. In addition, Sister Mary Katherine was willing to take back to the United States with her “any young lady” with an interest in the religious life. This appealed so much to Alwine that she asked her parents for permission to write to Sister Mary Katherine about going to Maryville. Her letter was soon answered in the affirmative and Alwine’s father went to Essen to arrange her transportation.

On Saturday, October 18, 1913, Alwine went aboard a Red Star Line ship, the S. S. Zeeland (Figure 1), in Antwerp, Belgium, to travel to Ellis Island, New York Harbor, United States of America. She was accompanied by Sister Mary Katherine and by Father Anselm of Conception Abbey in Maryville. Also with them were two Benedictine seminarians and two other young women intending, like Alwine, to enter the Sisters of St. Francis in Maryville. The ship left at noon and arrived at Ellis Island on Tuesday, October 28, 1913. They were met in New York by

Mother Mary Augustine Giesen, founder of the Maryville community of Sisters, and Sister Mary Mechtildis Eickholt, who escorted them to their new home in Missouri.³

The following Saturday, November 1, Alwine received her cap as a postulate and had her first meal with the Sisters of St. Francis. Six months later, on May 23, 1914, she became a novice and was given the name Sister Mary Teresa. Over the course of the next two years as a novice, she learned the English language and became trained as a nurse in addition to becoming indoctrinated in religious life.⁴



Figure 1. Postcard photograph of the S. S. Zeeland, the Red Star Line ship on which Alwine Bramsiepe traveled from Antwerp, Belgium, to Ellis Island, New York Harbor, United States of America, in October of 1913. From Jonathan Kinghorn.

On May 23, 1916, Sister Teresa pronounced her first vows at Maryville. On June 13 of the following month, she was taken to St. An-



Figure 2. Photograph of St. Anthony's Hospital at about the time of arrival of Alwine Bramsiepe. From *Bulletin of Saint Anthony's Hospital*, Volume 1, August, 1920.

thony's Hospital (Figure 2) in Oklahoma City to complete nurses training. On June 17, 1917, she graduated from nursing school at St. Anthony's. After passing the state board examination, she became a registered nurse in the state of Oklahoma.⁵

For several years after becoming licensed as a nurse, Sister Teresa (Figure 3) worked in the surgical division at St. Anthony's. She was subsequently transferred to the pediatric division and then became supervisor of the medical-surgical division of nursing at the hospital. Starting in about 1926, several of the sisters at St. Anthony's were sent for education in other disciplines. Sister Teresa went to the Academy of St. Joseph in Guthrie for training in medical technology.

She was assigned during this period of time to the pathology laboratory supervised by a local physician, Hugh Gilbert Jeter, and became licensed as a medical technologist. In 1929, after two years at St. Joseph's, she enrolled in the School of Pharmacy at The University of Oklahoma (OU) in Norman.⁶



Figure 3. Sister Mary Teresa Bramsiepe. From *Oklahoma Pharmacist*, 24 (July, 1958): 7.

Sister Teresa graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in pharmacy from OU on June 9, 1931. Just before graduation, on June 2, she passed the examination to become licensed by the Oklahoma State Board of Pharmacy. Receiving the Master of Science in pharmacy at OU at the same time were two future pharmacy educators, Ina Lorene Griffith and Ella Blanche Sommers.⁷

At the time of Sister Teresa's graduation from OU, the pharmacy at St. Anthony's Hospital was being managed by a cardiologist, Frederick Redding Hood. In 1932, after one year of working under Hood's guidance, Sister Teresa took over his position as director of the pharmacy. A central supply department was implemented in the hospital in 1933 and Sister Teresa was named its director with a registered nurse named to manage the new unit (Figure 4).⁸

In 1940, Sister Teresa became a member of the American Pharma-

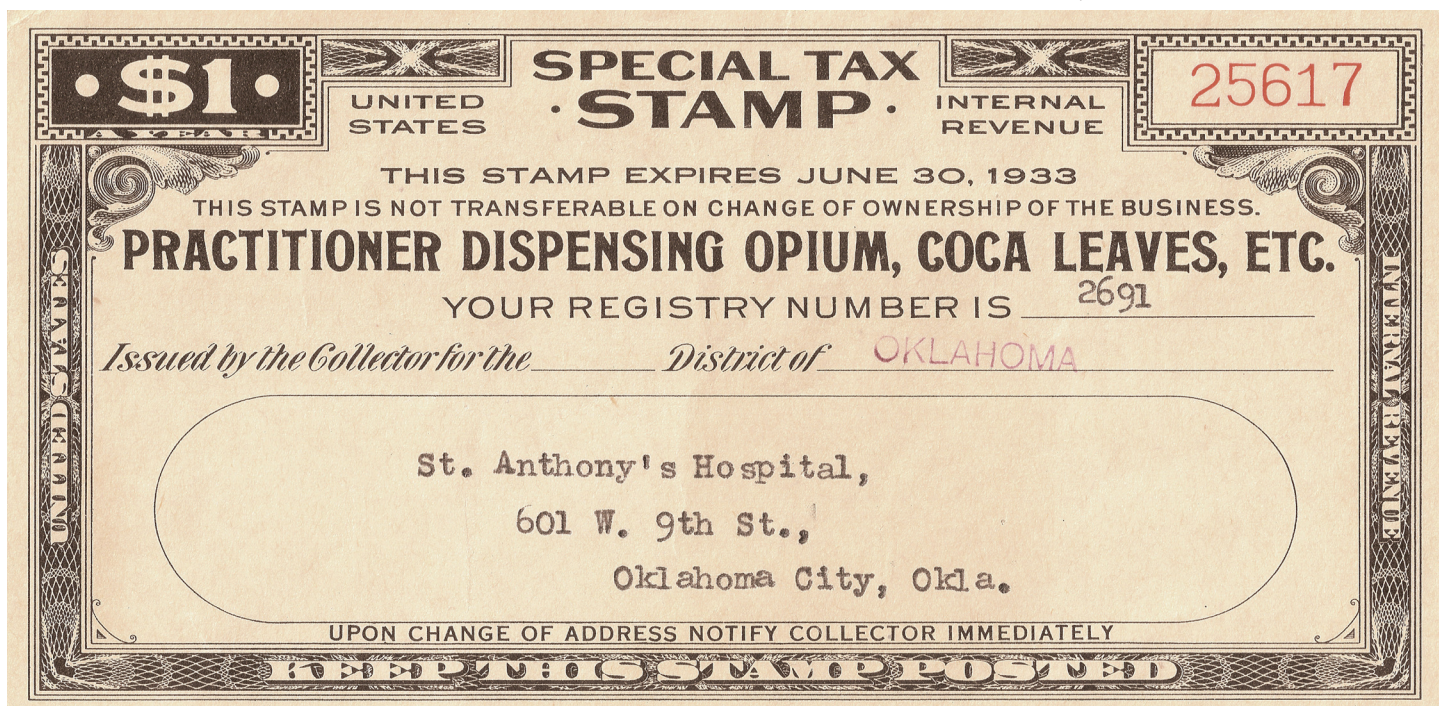


Figure 4. Tax Stamp for dispensing narcotic substances issued to St. Anthony's Hospital soon after Sister Teresa became director of the pharmacy and in charge of the central supply department. From the Oklahoma Frontier Drug Store Museum in Guthrie, Oklahoma.

ceutical Association (APhA, now American Pharmacists Association). At this time, APhA member pharmacists associated with hospital pharmacies participated in a branch of the organization devoted to their interests. However, in 1942, there was strong enough sentiment to form a separate organization called the American Society of Hospital Pharmacists (ASHP, now American Society of Health-System Pharmacists). Sister Teresa was a charter member of the ASHP.⁹

After its establishment, the ASHP began encouraging the formation of affiliated state chapters. Sister Teresa tried on several occasions in the 1940s to start an Oklahoma chapter (Figure 5). At the time, however, there were relatively few hospital pharmacies in the state and, consequently, a small number of pharmacists interested in hospital pharmacy. Consequently, small groups of interested hospital pharmacists continued to meet extemporaneously with Sister Teresa at St. Anthony's to discuss topics of mutual interest.¹⁰

By early 1951, there was still no formal organization of hospital pharmacists in Oklahoma. However, in February of that year, Sister Teresa held a seminal meeting in the library at St. Anthony's with George West, Chief Pharmacist at The University of Oklahoma Hospital, and Vernon Bennett, Chief Pharmacist at Wesley Hospital. Since all three were located in Oklahoma City, it was relatively easy to schedule the meeting. Their purpose was to "discuss the possibility of laying a foundation for a society for the hospital pharmacists of Oklahoma." The outcome was the scheduling of another meeting to include Oklahoma pharmacists from a various practice settings for the purpose of effecting formation of the society.¹¹

At 7:30 on Tuesday evening, April 3, 1951, twenty-seven individuals met at Assembly Hall of the Nurses Home at St. Anthony's Hospital in Oklahoma City for the purpose of establishing a hospital pharmacy society for Oklahoma. The attendees included hospital and retail pharmacists as well as faculty members and students from the College of Pharmacy at OU. In addition, the meeting was attended by representatives from several pharmaceutical companies. Sister Teresa, temporary chairman, called the meeting to order.

After calling the April 3 meeting to order, Sister Teresa asked Ralph Enix, retail pharmacist from Kingfisher and president of the Oklahoma State Board of Pharmacy, to preside. Enix asked the attendees to express their opinions regarding the formation of a hospital pharmacy society for Oklahoma. The minutes of the meeting report that "all were in agreement" that the time was right for the establishment of such an organization. Subsequently, a motion was made by Ralph William Clark, dean of the OU College of Pharmacy, that a steering committee guide the organization for the early meetings and that officers be elected at a later date. After the motion carried, Sister Teresa was elected chairman, pro tem, and George West elected co-chairman, pro tem, of the organizational steering committee.

After the business session that evening, Clark spoke to the group about his experiences during a recent tour of hospital pharmacies in eastern states. This set the tone for future meetings at which members or invited speakers would make presentations on a topic of interest to the audience.

The administration of St. Anthony's Hospital paid expenses for meetings held up to this date and made a cash donation of twenty-five dollars to the society. At the April 3 meeting, Ralph Enix and George West each donated ten dollar to the society. Connie Masterson, retail pharmacist from Oklahoma City and president of the American

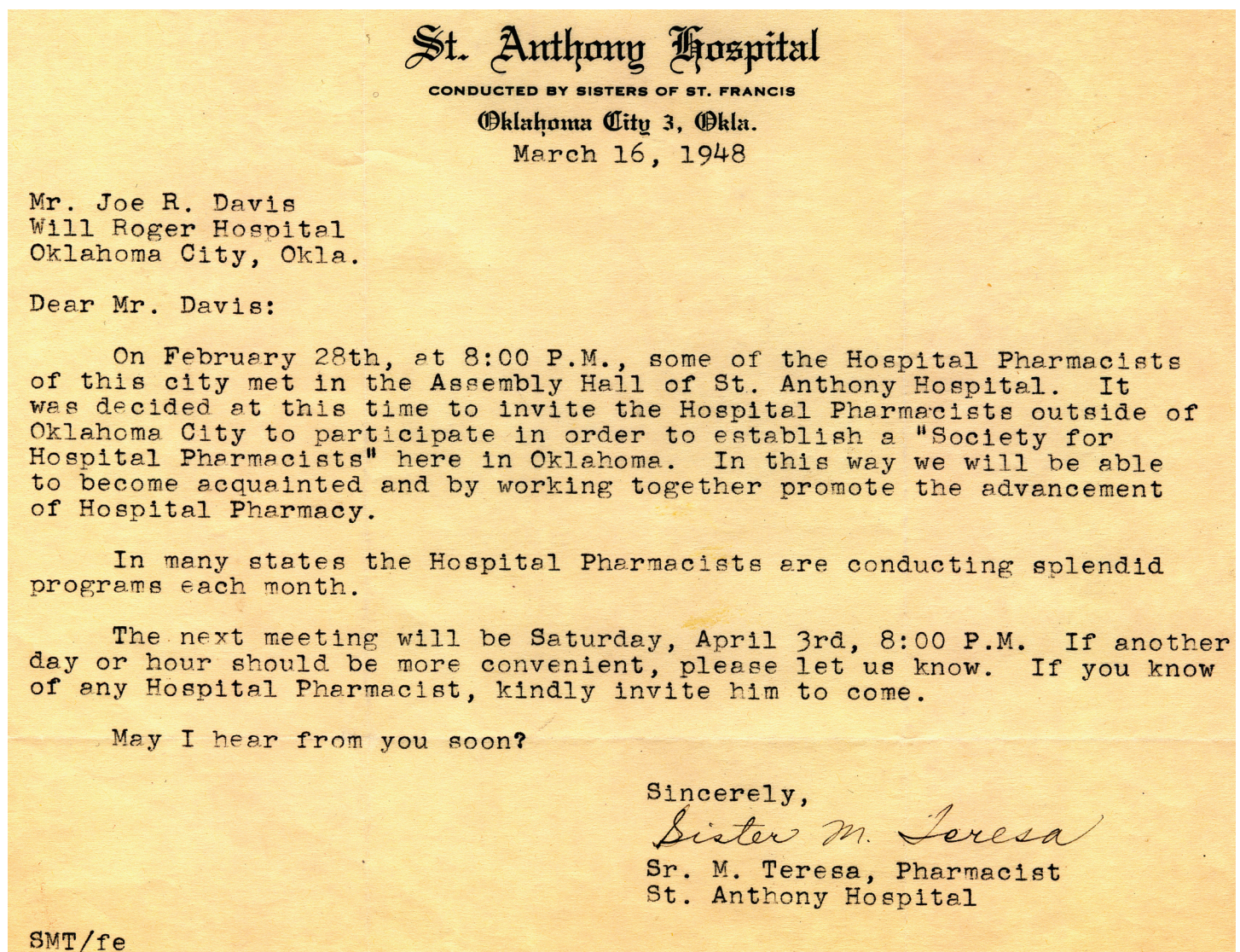


Figure 5. Letter from Sister Teresa to Joe Davis, one of the earliest extant documents related to her drive to establish an Oklahoma chapter of the ASHP.



Figure 6. Sister Teresa with George West at the first meeting of the newly organized OSHP, May 16, 1951. From Oklahoma Pharmacist, 16 (June, 1951): 10.

College of Apothecaries, donated stationary for the society in its first year.

Although the meeting on April 3 was for the purpose of establishing a society for hospital pharmacy in the state, retail pharmacy was well-represented. In addition to Enix and Masterson, the meeting was attended by E. R. “Pete” Weaver, Secretary of the Oklahoma Pharmaceutical Association (OPhA). Also present was O. C. Bogdahn of Woodward, OPhA president-elect. Attendees from the OU College of Pharmacy included faculty members John B. Bruce and Jean Brown in addition to Clark. Also, OU pharmacy students, Joe Rieger and Erwin A. Russ, were in the audience.

Sister Teresa called for the steering committee to meet in Assembly Hall of St. Anthony’s at 7:45 on Wednesday evening, May 9. The ten members gathered that night had been selected by the two co-chairs of the steering committee from a list of hospital pharmacists. The only attendee from outside of Oklahoma City was Marguerite Jones, a hospital pharmacist at Hillcrest Memorial Hospital in Tulsa.¹²

Sister Teresa outlined the goals of the steering committee and pointed out that the committee’s main purpose was to make a “basic outline for organizing the society.” Other tasks before the committee were to appoint a nominating committee, select a name for the organization to submit to the membership for approval, draft constitution and by-laws, and select times and places for meetings. The members agreed to serve for at least one year to aid the initial development of the society.

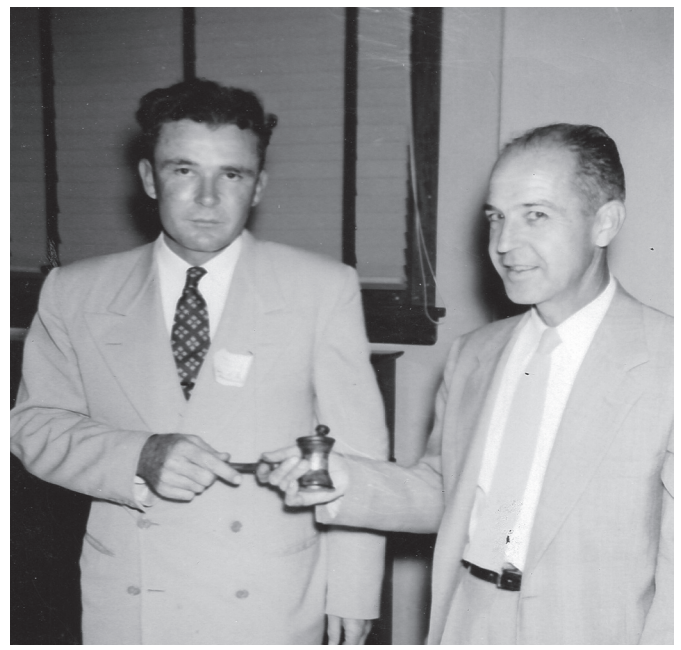


Figure 7. Passing the gavel by presidents of the OSHP. Picture at left shows George West passing the gavel to incoming 1952 president, Ralph Reed, and the picture at right shows Ralph Reed passing the same gavel to 1953 president Joe Davis. Pictures from the scrapbook of Sister Teresa in the Oklahoma Frontier Drug Store Museum, Guthrie, Oklahoma.



Figure 8. Marguerite Jones, 1954 president, passing the OSHP presidential gavel to 1955 president, Sister Teresa. From the scrapbook of Sister Teresa in the Oklahoma Frontier Drug Store Museum, Guthrie, Oklahoma.



Figure 9. Ralph Reed (second from left in front row) received the presidential gavel in 1957 passed from Sister Teresa through A. A. Maninno, McKesson representative from New York. From Oklahoma Pharmacist, 23 (January, 1958): 5.

On May 9, Elaine Howell was elected secretary pro tem of the steering committee. Sister Teresa appointed Joe Davis and George West to the nominating committee and charged them with providing a list of two nominations for each of three offices - namely president, vice-president, and secretary/treasurer. The steering committee agreed that the name of the organization to be submitted for consideration by the membership should be "Oklahoma Society for Hospital Pharmacists." Furthermore, the annual membership fee was recommended to be set at one dollar. Eligibility of representatives of manufacturing companies for membership was discussed without a concluding recommendation.

The next meeting for the hospital pharmacists was set by the steering committee on the following Wednesday evening, May 16, at St. Anthony's Assembly Hall. Sister Teresa called the meeting to order at 7:50 that night. Of approximately twenty-two attendees, nine were hospital pharmacists. The OPhA was represented by Weaver and Bogdahn as well as Earl Gilliam, OPhA president. Weaver's daughter, Addie, a pharmacy student at OU, accompanied her father to the meeting. John Bruce and Jean Brown represented the OU pharmacy faculty.¹³

The recommendation that the steering committee serve for one year was approved and officers elected for the upcoming year were George L. West as president, Elaine Haddad as vice-president, and Sister Teresa as secretary/treasurer (Figure 6). Figures 7-9 depict subsequent transfers of the presidential gavel.

Prior to the business meeting on May 16, John Bruce gave a presentation on "The Modern Drug," during which he showed "numerous slides." The business meeting started at about 9:10 P. M., after his talk.

Pete Weaver invited the society to attend the annual OPhA meeting and to submit information for a regular column in the OPhA publication "Oklahoma Pharmacist." He also committed to placing the name of the society and its officers on his list of state pharmacy organizations.

Probably because of the traveling distance, there were no hospital pharmacists from Tulsa at the May 16 meeting. President West recommended that two societies be formed, one for Oklahoma City and one for Tulsa. It was

agreed that the societies thus formed would use the names “Oklahoma City Chapter” and “Tulsa Chapter” in the title. The steering committee was consequently charged with formulating a plan to facilitate the formation of a state-wide organization.

The following Tuesday evening, May 22, a meeting was held in Assembly Hall of Hillcrest Memorial Hospital in Tulsa to organize a Tulsa chapter of the OSHP. Marguerite Jones called the meeting to order at 8:00 and called on Ralph Clark to preside. Also present at the meeting were several attendees of previous meetings, namely George West, Sister Regina, Sister Teresa, Ralph Reed, John Bruce, and Pete Weaver. In addition, D. L. Kincaid of Tulsa, a past-president of OPhA and incoming president of the Oklahoma State Board of Pharmacy, was present.

In light of the small number of hospital pharmacists in the Tulsa area, it was agreed that the Oklahoma City and Tulsa chapters should be combined and not become separate groups within the OSHP. Accordingly, a motion by Ralph Reed to elect a Tulsa pharmacist as second vice-president carried. Marguerite Jones was unanimously selected for this position. It was further decided that Geraldine McKay and Sister Godulina, both of St. John’s Hospital in Tulsa, would be added as members of the steering committee.

The OSHP would meet for the next few years on a monthly basis with the exception of the summer months and would include hospital pharmacists state-wide. The OSHP also regularly gathered at the annual meeting of the OPhA, but started its own annual meetings in 1954 (Figure 10). The society formulated constitution and by-laws patterned after those of the ASHP and became officially affiliated with the parent organization in 1953. During the formative period, Sister Teresa remained in close contact with the ASHP office in Washington as the constitution and by-laws for OSHP were drafted and adopted and as the process of establishing an affiliation developed.¹⁴

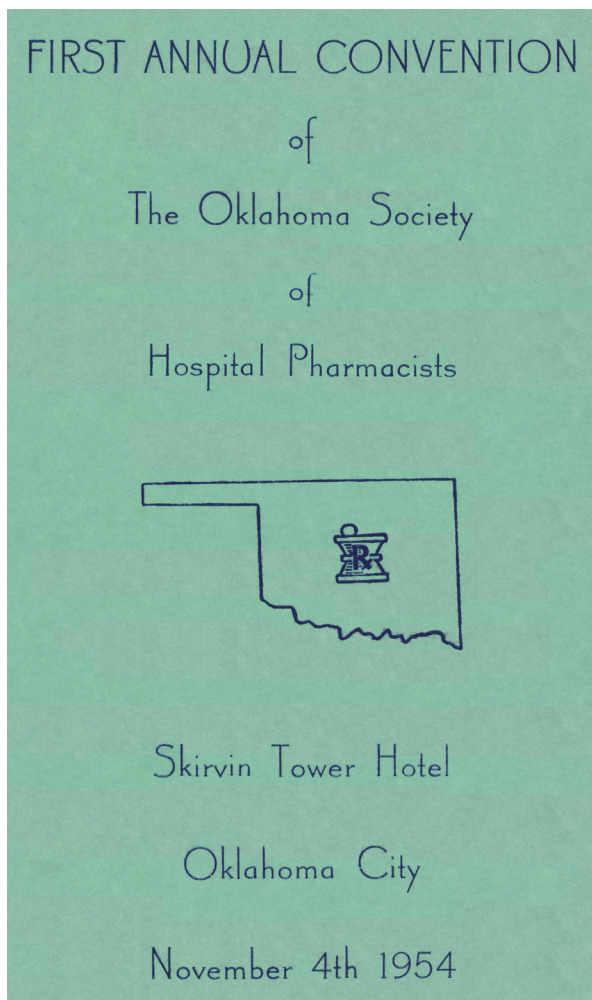


Figure 10. Cover of the program for the first annual convention of the OSHP held in Oklahoma City on November 4, 1954.

Sister Teresa remained in the office of secretary/treasurer until 1955 when she was elected president of the OSHP. Wanda Teakell took over as secretary/treasurer during the two years that Sister Teresa served as president. In 1961, the office of secretary was separated from that of treasurer and Sister Teresa kept the secretary position, sometimes referred to as Corresponding Secretary.

Largely because of the involvement of Sister Teresa, the OSHP continued to attract a steady stream of quality speakers from across the nation, including such notables as the hospital pharmacist Paul F. Parker (Figure 11).

Sister Teresa relinquished her office as Corresponding Secretary in November of 1965 when she was transferred to St. Elizabeth’s Hospital in Hannibal, Missouri. Except for a brief period of time in 1958 when she was allowed to visit her family in Germany, she worked continuously for the OSHP from the 1940s until the time she left Oklahoma.¹⁵

Sister Teresa received many awards, including a Distinguished Service to Pharmacy award from the OU Pharmacy Alumni Association (Figure 12). The OSHP expressed their gratitude for her service with a gift of a Hamilton



Figure 11. Participants in the April of 1959 OSHP meeting included (from left) Blanche Sommers, Paul F. Parker, Harriet Harvey, Stokes Baggett, and Sister Teresa. From *Oklahoma Pharmacist*, 24 (June, 1959): 15.

a student with special interest in hospital pharmacy.

In February of 1972, Sister Teresa was transferred to the Mount Alverno Convent in Maryville. She died there on February 18, 1982.

Acknowledgements

The author expresses appreciation for support to Dr. Charles Eldwyn Bradley of Tuttle, Oklahoma, to Sister Mary-

watch (Figure 13) on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of its founding (Figure 14). The American Board of Diplomates in Pharmacy gave her a certificate of merit in 1971. The American College of Apothecaries gave her a life membership as a hospital fellow in 1974. In the same year, the Catholic Pharmacists Guild gave her an Award of Merit. In addition, she was listed in the *Who's Who of the National Catholic Pharmacists Guild of America* in 1970. In 1975, she was elected a Fellow in the Royal Society of Health of London and named a consultant of the Board of Diplomates in Pharmacy. The Sister Mary Teresa Bramsiepe Hospital Award is given annually by the Southwestern Oklahoma State University College of Pharmacy to



Figure 12. Sister Teresa received a Distinguished Service to Pharmacy award from the OU Pharmacy Alumni Association in 1958. From left surrounding her are Mrs. Leon Conley, Ralph Bienfang, Leon Conley, and Blanche Sommers. From *Oklahoma Pharmacist*, 24 (August, 1958): 12.



Figure 13. For service to the society, Marguerite Lloyd presented Sister Teresa with a Hamilton watch on behalf of the OSHP at the 1961 annual meeting of the OPhA. From *Oklahoma Pharmacist*, 26 (June, 1961): 15.

lu Stueber of the Franciscan Sisters of Mary, St. Louis, Missouri, and to Mark and Pam Ekiss of the Oklahoma Frontier Drug Store Museum in Guthrie, Oklahoma.

Notes and References

¹ Biographical information about Alwine Bramsiepe and her family is based on her autobiography obtained from Sister Marylu Stueber, Archivist, Franciscan Sisters of Mary.

² The records at Ellis Island show that Alwine was living in Steele, Germany, just before boarding the ship to come to the United States. Therefore, it is likely that the millinery store in which Alwine worked was located in Steele, a suburb of Essen.

³ Alwine referred to the ship on which she traveled as the “New Zealand,” but Ellis Island and Red Star Line records list the vessel as the Zeeland. Alwine noted in her autobiography that an answer from Sister Mary Katherine to her letter took about two weeks. This was attributed to the fact that Sister Mary Katherine was in Switzerland at the time attending to Father Anselm, an Abbot from Conception Abbey in Maryville, who had recently had an appendectomy in a Swiss hospital. The two future novitiates with Alwine were Sophia Henseler and Anna Mary Inglin, to be designated Sister Mary Anselma and Sister Mary Barbara, respectively, at the beginning of their training in Maryville. The ship’s manifest lists the birthplace of Alwine Bramsiepe as Kupferdreh, Germany, of which Byfang is considered a suburb. The manifest also notes that she was twenty years and six months of age at the time of her arrival in New York and that she stood five feet, five inches tall, with fair complexion, brown eyes, and brown hair.

⁴ Alwine was named after Therese of Lisieux, also known as the “Little Flower of Lisieux, France,” who later attained sainthood as “St. Therese of Lisieux.”

⁵ According to biographical information from the Franciscan Sisters of Mary, Mother Augustine brought Sister Teresa from Maryville to Oklahoma City in 1916.



Figure 14. Photograph of pharmacists and students attending the luncheon at the annual meeting of the OSHP at the Mayo Hotel in Tulsa on November 3, 1961, celebrating the tenth anniversary of the founding. From the scrapbook of Sister Teresa in the Oklahoma Frontier Drug Store Museum, Guthrie, Oklahoma.

⁶ Another of Sister Teresa's colleagues to enter the pharmacy program in Norman in 1929 was Sister Mary Regina Schumann.

⁷ A list of OU students slated for graduation on June 9, 1931, was published in the *Daily Oklahoman*, May 24, 1931, and those passing the pharmacy board examination in *ibid.*, June 4, 1931. A list of all graduates from the OU pharmacy program between 1896 and 1993 is published in Leo Glenn Tate, *Centennial: A History of the University of Oklahoma College of Pharmacy, 1893-1993*. (Oklahoma City, The University of Oklahoma College of Pharmacy, 1993): 125-153. Sister Teresa was issued certificate number 4422 by the Oklahoma State Board of Pharmacy. Sister Mary Regina Schumann was given number 4423. Oklahoma State Board of Pharmacy, Twenty-fifth Annual Report, 1932.

⁸ According to an article in the *Daily Oklahoman*, April 26, 1998, St. Anthony's Hospital opened the first hospital pharmacy in Oklahoma in 1925.

⁹ A brief history of the ASHP, compiled by Jamilla-ann Bethune, William A. Zellmer, and Waneta Sage-Gagne, 2002, was found in January, 2011, at <http://www.ashp.org/history>. Sister Teresa is on a list of charter members of the ASHP published in *Official Bulletin of the American Society of Hospital Pharmacists*, 1 (No. 7, 1943): 7.

¹⁰ Documents, especially minutes of the meetings of the OSHP, compiled and preserved by Sister Teresa were given by her to Dr. Charles Eldwyn Bradley, a past-president of the OSHP, shortly before she left Oklahoma. Bradley turned them over to the author in 2010.

¹¹ Organizational details found in the minutes of the OSHP and in a history of the OSHP written by Sister Teresa in 1958. These materials are in possession of the author.

¹² The minutes of the May 9, 1951, steering committee meeting listed the attendees as Sister Teresa, Sister Regina, Ralph Reed, George West, Robert L. Tucker, Joe Davis, Elaine Haddad, Colleen Swart, Elaine Howell, and Marguerite Jones. Relph Earl Reed was a son of Alfred "Fred" Reed, an early-day drug store owner in Norman, Oklahoma Territory. Carl K. Buckner, Compiler and Editor, *Profiles of Oklahoma Pharmacy*, Volume 1 (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma Pharmacists Association, 2008): 181-182. Ralph Reed died on September 30, 1983. The Norman Transcript, October 2, 1983.

¹³ The list of those attending the May 16, 1951, meeting of the society is attached to the minutes. A history of the organization written by Sister Teresa in 1958 lists the hospital pharmacists present at the meeting as Ralph Reed of the OU Infirmary in Norman, George West of University Hospital in Oklahoma City, Robert L. Tucker and Joe R. Davis of the Veterans Administration in Oklahoma City, Elaine Haddad of Mercy Hospital in Oklahoma City, Colleen Swart of McBride Bone and Joint Hospital in Oklahoma City, and Elaine Howell, Sister Regina, and Sister Teresa of St. Anthony Hospital in Oklahoma City. Haddad and Swart are not on the attendance list attached to the meeting minutes.

¹⁴ The first constitution and by-laws of the OSHP were adopted at the January 16, 1952, meeting. In 1952, local affiliates were required to have twelve dues-paid members of the ASHP, at the time a division of the APhA. ASHP members were also required to be APhA members. The letter informing Sister Teresa that the ASHP Executive Committee had approved the OSHP as an affiliate was signed by Gloria Niemeyer, Secretary, and dated March 3, 1953.

¹⁵ Sister Teresa's trip to Germany in 1958 was noted as the first time she had been able to go home since her 1913 arrival in the United States. *Daily Oklahoman*, June 29, 1958; *Oklahoma Pharmacist*, 24 (July, 1958): 7.